



The State of New Hampshire  
*Department of Environmental Services*



Michael P. Nolin  
Commissioner

January 11, 2006

The Honorable David P. Currier, Chairman  
Resources, Recreation, and Development Committee  
Room 305, LOB  
Concord, NH 03301

**RE: House Bill 1701, Relative to boat fee agents of the Department of Safety.**

Dear Representative Currier:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 1701, which would require agents of the Department of Safety to remit boat registration fees to the Department of Safety and would also increase the allocation of boat registration fee funds to the Department of Environmental Services (DES), Exotic Aquatic Plant Control Fund from \$5 to \$9 per boat registration. DES supports this legislation.

DES currently receives \$5.00 per boat registration to fund the Clean Lakes and Exotic Species Programs. The total funding varies from year to year but is generally just over \$500,000 per year for the entire program. Of the \$5.00 per boat registration collected, by statute, \$1.50 is allocated to exotic aquatic plant control plus outreach and boater education, \$3.00 for prevention and research grants, and \$0.50 to support the Clean Lakes Program.

In 2005, the available revenues for exotic aquatic plant control were about \$85,000, just over half of the revenues generated from the \$1.50 available for exotic aquatic plant control and outreach. In contrast, DES received about 25 competitive proposals from applicants for exotic aquatic plant control with total requested funding of \$400,000. This was a representative year. As has been the case for at least 5 years, significantly more applications for exotic aquatic plant control have been received than could be funded from existing revenues so a lot more could be done if more resources were available.

An increase of \$4 per boat registration would increase the annual amounts available for control grants by just over \$400,000 per year, substantially increasing our ability to fund control projects. This would also provide more flexibility to support innovative control projects that can cost more but may be more effective in the long term. Consequently, passage of HB 1701 could go a long ways towards New Hampshire having greater control of exotic aquatic species thus enhancing the protection of the health and integrity of our waterbodies for future generations.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment in support of this important legislation. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to call Jody Connor at 271-3414 or me at 271-3449.

Sincerely,

Michael P. Nolin

cc: Representative Richard Drisko